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Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation

South Africa:* draft resolution

Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 67/226 of 21 December 2012, 68/229 of 20 December 2013 and 69/238 of 19 December 2014 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2013/5 of 12 July 2013 and 2014/14 of 14 July 2014, in which key system-wide policy orientations were established for development cooperation at both the Headquarters and the country levels,

Reaffirming the importance of the timely and full implementation of the system-wide policy orientations established in General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Recalling the critical role of the Council in providing coordination, monitoring and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented in a full and timely manner on a system-wide basis in accordance with the present resolution and General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996, 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, 61/16 of 20 November 2006, 65/285 of 29 June 2011, 67/226 and 68/1 of 20 September 2013,

Reaffirming that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of

* *On behalf* of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

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programme countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

Recognizing the importance and the catalytic role of predictable official development assistance for international development,

Introduction

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;[1]

2. *Acknowledges* the efforts of the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States and all relevant entities, to improve the monitoring and reporting framework for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to make it more comprehensive and coherent;

3. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes to make every effort to continue to improve monitoring and data collection methods with a view to contributing towards further enhancement of the analytical quality of the report of the Secretary-General on operational activities for development of the United Nations system;

4. *Requests* the United Nations development system to provide quality inputs and appropriate updates to the report of the Secretary-General with a view to continuing to improve high-quality analytical reporting on the operational activities for development, while stressing the need to minimize transaction costs associated with reporting;

5. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to further improve the analytical and evidence-based quality of the report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including by addressing challenges and presenting options for enhancing the implementation of system-wide mandates of the review;

6. *Expresses regret* that the United Nations Development Group and the High-level Committee on Management have not fully aligned their efforts to monitor the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and aligned their work in the area of operational activities for development with the review, and calls upon the Secretary-General in this regard to include in his report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review the challenges that have been faced by the Development Group and the High-level Committee in pursuing such efforts;

7. *Reiterates its request* to the United Nations funds and programmes that have not already done so to consolidate their annual reporting on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review within their reporting on the implementation of their strategic plans;

8. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes to continue to improve the quality of their annual reports to the Economic and Social Council;

[1] A/70/62-E/2015/4.

9. *Reiterates its encouragement* to entities of the United Nations development system with operational activities for development that have not done so to fully align their strategic plans and their strategic planning and budgeting cycles with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, taking into account their respective mandates;

Funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

10. *Reiterates* that core resources, because of their untied nature, continue to be the bedrock of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and in this regard reaffirms the need for the organizations to address, on a continuous basis, the imbalance between core and non-core resources and to report to the Council in 2016, as part of their regular reporting, on the measures taken to address this imbalance;

11. *Notes* that the majority of the increase in funding for the United Nations development system between 1998 and 2013 was in the form of non-core resources, resulting in an imbalance between core and non-core resources, and notes with concern that the percentage of core resources in the overall funding for operational activities continued to decline, representing only 25 per cent in 2013;

12. *Also notes* that non-core resources represent an important contribution to the overall resource base of the United Nations development system and complement core resources in supporting operational activities for development, thus contributing to an increase in total resources, while noting the need to make non-core resources more flexible and better aligned with strategic plans and national priorities and recognizing that non-core resources are not a substitute for core resources;

13. *Recognizes* that non-core resources pose challenges, in particular restricted earmarked funding such as single-donor project-specific funding, by potentially increasing transaction costs, fragmentation, competition and overlap among entities and providing disincentives for pursuing an Organization-wide focus, strategic positioning and coherence and may also potentially distort programme priorities regulated by intergovernmental bodies and processes;

14. *Recalls* the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 67/226 with respect to taking concrete measures to broaden the donor base, and requests the United Nations funds and programmes, and encourages the specialized agencies, to report annually to their governing bodies on concrete measures taken to broaden the donor base and increase the number of countries and other partners making contributions to the United Nations development system in order to reduce the reliance of the system on a limited number of donors;

15. *Expresses its regret* that the mandate contained in General Assembly resolutions 67/226 and 68/229 with respect to the critical mass of core resources was not fulfilled, while noting the adoption in 2014 by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services of decisions 2014/24 and 2014/25 and the adoption by the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund of decision 2014/17, in which they noted common principles for the concept of critical mass of resources and core resources as developed by United Nations funds and programmes and requested the funds and programmes to develop and present

resource mobilization strategies for the consideration of their executive boards in 2015;

16. *Stresses* the need to avoid the use of core/regular resources to subsidize non-core/extrabudgetary financed activities, and reaffirms that the guiding principle governing the financing of all non-programme costs should be based on full cost recovery, proportionally, from core and non-core funding sources;

17. *Takes note with appreciation* of the organization by executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes of structured dialogues with Member States during 2014 on how to finance the development results agreed in the strategic planning cycle of the respective entities, and in this regard requests the executive boards of the United Nations funds and programmes and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, as appropriate, to organize such structured dialogues on an annual basis, with a view to making non-core resources more predictable and less restricted/earmarked, broadening the donor base and improving the adequacy and predictability of resource flows;

18. *Welcomes* the progress made by the United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies to ensure that available and projected core and non-core resources are consolidated within an integrated budgetary framework, based on the priorities of their respective strategic plans, and encourages all agencies that have not already done so to develop such integrated frameworks in their next budget cycle;

Contribution of the operational activities of the United Nations to national capacity development and development effectiveness

19. *Expresses its concern* that the mandate contained in General Assembly resolution 67/226 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2013/5 and 2014/14 with respect to the request to the United Nations development system to develop, for the consideration of Member States, a common approach for measuring progress in capacity development, including measures to ensure sustainability, as well as specific frameworks aimed at enabling programme countries, upon their request, to design, monitor and evaluate results in the development of their capacity to achieve national development goals and strategies was not fulfilled, and requests the Secretary-General to include, in his report on the implementation of Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2016, comprehensive and evidence-based proposals in this regard;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report on the implementation of Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to the Council in 2016, in consultation with Member States, information on steps taken by entities of the United Nations development system to strengthen and use national capacities and to make proposals to address any obstacles;

21. *Requests* the funds and programmes of the United Nations development system, and invites the specialized agencies, to consider the findings and observations related to national capacity gaps repeatedly highlighted by programme countries to be addressed through the work of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including through the strengthening and

use of national capacities, and to report to their governing bodies in 2016 with recommendations for implementation in this regard;

Poverty eradication

22. *Welcomes* the integration of poverty eradication, as the overarching priority, into the strategic plans of some United Nations system organizations, in accordance with their mandates;

23. *Reaffirms* the call by the General Assembly, contained in its resolution 67/226, for the organizations of the United Nations development system to assign the highest priority to the eradication of poverty, and in this regard requests the United Nations funds and programmes to include in their regular reporting to the Council information on steps taken, in accordance with their mandates, on the scaling up of efforts to address the root causes of extreme poverty and hunger, sharing of good practices, lessons learned, strategies, programmes and policies, inter alia, capacity-building, employment generation, education, vocational training, rural development and the mobilization of resources, which aim at achieving poverty eradication and promoting the active participation of those living in poverty in the design and implementation of such programmes and policies;

South-South cooperation

24. *Stresses* that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation;

25. *Recalls* the requests contained in General Assembly resolution 67/226 on strengthening South-South cooperation, notes in this regard the progress made by some entities of the United Nations development system in mainstreaming South-South and triangular cooperation into their key policies, strategic frameworks, operational activities and budgets, and welcomes the recommendations and measures, as set out in decision 18/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation,[2] to strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation, including through improved allocation of resources across the United Nations development system, including the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation;

26. *Welcomes*, in this regard, the request contained in General Assembly resolution 69/239 of 19 December 2014 to the Secretary-General, noting that further deliberation by Member States on the options presented in his report on measures to further strengthen the Office for South-South Cooperation will be required before a decision is taken on the idea of separating the Office for South-South Cooperation as operationally autonomous from the United Nations Development Programme, to present, as part of his comprehensive report to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its intersessional session to be held in 2015, in consultation with Member States, the Office for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Development Programme, a comprehensive proposal on upscaling the Office in financial, human and budgetary terms under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme, including through the appointment of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, and at the same time recommending

[2] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/69/39), chap. I.

specific contributions of the United Nations Development Programme under such a change;

27. *Also welcomes* the request contained in General Assembly resolution 69/239 to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, to establish a more formalized and strengthened inter-agency mechanism coordinated by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, with a view to encouraging joint support to South-South and triangular initiatives, as well as sharing information on development activities and results achieved by various organizations through their respective business models in support of South-South and triangular cooperation, its call upon the United Nations development system to designate representational focal points to join the mechanism and its request to the Administrator to give the Office for South-South Cooperation the opportunity to be represented more regularly in strategic and coordination mechanisms of the Development Group when matters affecting South-South and triangular cooperation are being discussed;

28. *Requests*, in this regard, that the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, as Chair of the United Nations Development Group, convene extensive consultations of its task team on South-South and triangular cooperation with Member States and other relevant stakeholders during 2015 and present the assessment of the task team for the consideration of the Council during its operational activities segment in 2016;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, to present, as part of his report on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2016, recommendations based on a thorough analysis of obstacles to and incentives for the scaling up of United Nations support for South-South cooperation as well as the Office for South-South Cooperation, including lessons learned from the implementation of successful South-South cooperation projects and programmes;

30. *Calls upon* the funds, programmes and agencies that have not done so to undertake evaluations and assessments of South-South cooperation with a view to informing their institutional policies and strategies and to ensuring that the solutions and expertise of the South are integrated in the United Nations operational activities in an effective and efficient manner;

31. *Reaffirms* the call in paragraph 77 of General Assembly resolution 67/226 for all countries in a position to do so, as well as other stakeholders, to increase their support for South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation, especially by providing technical assistance and mobilizing financial resources on a sustainable basis, and in this regard requests the United Nations funds and programmes to clarify for Member States, as part of their regular briefings, the role of all stakeholders and the action taken so far by such entities in this regard;

32. *Recalls* the request contained in General Assembly resolution 67/226 to the heads of the specialized agencies, the United Nations funds and programmes and regional commissions to pay special attention to the implementation of South-South cooperation projects, including those managed or supported by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, and requests the Secretary-General, as part of his regular reporting to the Council, to provide an update on progress in this regard;

Transition from relief to development

33. *Reaffirms* the request contained in General Assembly resolution 67/226 to the United Nations development system to accelerate progress in deepening coordination between Secretariat entities and members of the United Nations development system, inter alia, through the simplification and harmonization of programming instruments and processes and business practices, with a view to providing effective, efficient and responsive support to national efforts in countries in transition from relief to development, and requests the Secretary-General to include in his regular reporting to the Council comprehensive and evidence-based updates on progress in this regard;

34. *Notes* the approval of the policy on integrated assessment and planning and the policy on United Nations transitions in the context of mission drawdown or withdrawal, and requests the Secretary-General to properly inform and seek views of Member States on the implementation and review of these policies;

35. *Takes note with appreciation* of the increased coordination between the United Nations country teams and the Bretton Woods institutions in countries in transition from relief to development, and calls upon the country teams to strengthen such coordination at the strategic level, including joint assessments, planning and results frameworks, funding mechanisms and staff secondment;

United Nations Development Assistance Framework

36. *Expresses its concern* over the lack of transparency with regard to the reporting received from the United Nations system at the country level, and in this regard requests the United Nations development system to ensure that regular reporting on the results achieved by the system is provided to the Governments of programme countries at least twice in one cycle of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or the common planning framework in the specific case of the standard operating procedures for countries adopting the "Delivering as one" approach;

37. *Requests* the United Nations development system to ensure that reports to the Governments of programme countries are structured around the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or common planning framework outcomes, are linked to national development results and inform the Governments of programme countries of the results achieved by the United Nations country team as a whole, and requests the Secretary-General, as part of his regular reporting to the Council, to provide an update on progress in this regard;

38. *Also requests* the United Nations development system to improve the balance of effective and efficient reporting on contributions to national results, to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework or common planning framework outcomes and to the strategic plan outcomes of individual agencies, including through the possible introduction, in consultation with Member States, of a system-wide template for the United Nations country results report, and requests the Secretary-General, as part of his regular reporting to the Council, to provide an update on progress in this regard;

Resident coordinator system

39. *Notes with appreciation* progress achieved in implementing the cost-sharing agreement for the resident coordinator system, notes the funding gap expected for the resident coordinator system for 2015, in this regard requests entities of the United Nations development system that have not already done so to take appropriate actions to implement the agreement, subject to the approval of their governing bodies and without impacting programme delivery, including by paying their contribution in full, and reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to include in his regular reporting to the Council updates on agency-specific progress in this regard;

40. *Reaffirms* the importance of achieving diversification in the composition of the resident coordinator system in terms of geographical distribution and gender, also reaffirms the importance of the participation of all United Nations agencies, funds and programmes on an equal footing in the resident coordinator system, requests the Secretary-General to make every effort in this regard to ensure the full application of these principles in the appointment of resident coordinators, encourages all agencies to nominate qualified candidates for the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre, and requests the United Nations development system to continue to identify solutions in order to strengthen its ability to efficiently recruit and deploy appropriately senior and experienced resident coordinators who meet the highest standards of integrity;

"Delivering as one"

41. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes, and strongly encourages the specialized agencies, to take appropriate action to fully and coherently implement the standard operating procedures for countries adopting the "Delivering as one" approach on a voluntary basis, including the United Nations Development Group plan of action for Headquarters, and to report annually on progress in this regard at the annual meeting of their respective governing bodies;

42. *Recognizes* that pooled funding mechanisms are important tools in advancing "Delivering as one" in countries wishing to adopt this approach, and encourages donor countries and other countries in a position to do so to prioritize the use of such mechanisms in order to maximize the impact of the "Delivering as one" reforms in those countries;

Simplification and harmonization of business practices

43. *Requests* the United Nations funds and programmes to present comprehensive joint action plans for the simplification and harmonization of business practices to their respective executive boards in 2015, and invites the United Nations funds and programmes to undertake a thorough review of progress in the simplification and harmonization of business practices;

44. *Calls upon* the United Nations funds and programmes to present an update to their respective executive boards, in 2015, on progress made in following up the proposal on the common definition of operating costs and a common and standardized system of cost control, paying due attention to their different business models, with a view to taking a decision on this issue in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2016;

45. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Council at its substantive session of 2016, as part of his regular reporting, on the achievement of the full system-wide interoperability of enterprise resource planning systems in 2016 in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review;

46. *Notes* that some entities of the United Nations development system are establishing agency-specific service centres, and in this regard calls upon all relevant members of the system to participate in the establishment of the common service centres, with the intent that such centres provide long-term and system-wide cost savings and ensure higher quality, more effective and cost-efficient support services in all programme countries;

47. *Recognizes* that it is essential to ensure that United Nations country teams are made accountable for the design and implementation of business operations strategies, including common United Nations service centres, that are harmonized, cost-efficient and tailored to their country-specific requirements;

Results-based management

48. *Requests* the United Nations development system, in the context of reporting on its performance to Governments of programme countries, to develop common approaches and definitions with regard to measuring results and common indicators, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders involved, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to update the Council at the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2016, as part of his regular reporting;

49. *Also requests* the United Nations development system to engage in substantive and substantial dialogue with national Governments on how results at the national level are defined, measured and reported on, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to update the Council at the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2016 as part of his regular reporting;

Evaluation of operational activities for development

50. *Recalls* the policy for the independent system-wide evaluation of United Nations operational activities for development, in this regard reaffirms the decision of the General Assembly in its resolution 68/229 that two pilot independent system-wide evaluations should be conducted in 2014 on the themes set out therein, subject to the provision and availability of extrabudgetary resources, as outlined in the policy, notes with concern the lack of progress in this regard, reiterates its invitation to countries in a position to do so to contribute additional extrabudgetary resources for the effective and accelerated implementation of the evaluations in 2015, and requests the interim coordination mechanism for system-wide evaluation of operational activities for development of the United Nations system to provide an update to the Council on progress in the implementation of the evaluations at the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2015;

Follow-up

51. *Requests* all entities of the United Nations development system to take the post-2015 development agenda, once adopted, fully into account in the context of midterm reviews and, in order to ensure consistency and alignment with the agenda, in the elaboration of strategic plans and frameworks;

52. *Recognizes* the need to review the composition and functioning of the governing structures of the United Nations funds and programmes, in this regard recalls General Assembly resolution 69/238, and calls for early reforms of those governance structures;

53. *Welcomes* the dialogues held by the Council at the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2014 regarding the role of the United Nations development system in the changing development landscape and the need to align the United Nations system to address emerging challenges, in this regard reaffirms the decision of the Council to convene a transparent and inclusive dialogue involving Member States and all relevant stakeholders on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system, with a view to tackling the interlinkages between the alignment of functions, funding practices and governance structures of the United Nations funds and programmes, including early reform of their composition and functioning, the capacity and impact of the United Nations development system, partnership approaches and organizational arrangements, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and looks forward to these discussions being reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration and action by Member States during the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in 2016, with a view to fulfilling the role of the General Assembly in establishing key system-wide policy orientations for development cooperation and country-level modalities for the United Nations development system.